

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for starting up a flowline suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, said flowline being extended over the seabed from a wellhead and terminating at a joint end, said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser ~~extended in a catenary~~, said method comprising

a first stage~~[[,]]~~ of inducing ~~in which~~ elongation of said flowline is induced;

~~characterized in that it comprises moreover~~ a second stage~~[[,]]~~ in which of fixing said joint end ~~is fixed~~ with respect to said seabed to maintain said flowline in its ~~stretched~~ elongated position.

2. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising permitting ~~characterized in that~~ displacement of said joint end ~~is authorized~~ in the a direction of elongation of said flowline and prohibiting displacement of said joint end ~~is prohibited~~ in the an opposite direction.

3. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising guiding ~~or 2, characterized in that~~ said joint end ~~is guided~~ in translation during elongation of said flowline.

4. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3,~~ ~~characterized in that it comprises moreover~~ claim 1, further comprising a preliminary stage before said first stage comprising laying, in which said flowline ~~is laid~~ on the said seabed and connecting said subsea riser to said flowline is installed.

5. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 4, ~~wherein characterized in that~~ said subsea riser is connected to the said joint end during said preliminary stage.

6. (Currently Amended) A system for starting up a flowline (16) suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, comprising said flowline (16) ~~being extended~~ extends over ~~the~~ a seabed (12) from a wellhead (10) and ~~terminating~~ terminates at a joint end of said flowline (17), said joint end (17) being suitable for connection to a subsea riser (18) ~~extended in a catenary~~, and said flowline (16) being able to stretch;

~~characterized in that it comprises~~ a locking system means for fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed (12) for maintaining said flowline (16) in said stretched position after said flowline has been stretched.

7. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 6, ~~wherein characterized in that~~ said locking system includes a means include unidirectional arresting device operable means (39) ~~suited~~ to allowing allow displacement of said joint end (17) in ~~the~~ a direction of elongation of said flowline (16) and to ~~prohibiting prohibit~~ displacement of said joint end (17) in ~~the~~ an opposite direction.

8. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 7, further comprising a ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ guidance system means including a movable moving trolley (32), to which said joint end (17) is ~~suitable for connection~~ connectable to said trolley, a slide device on which said moving movable trolley is slidable (32) ~~being able to slide on means forming rails (30)~~ in said direction of elongation of said flowline.

9. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that it~~ 14, wherein said slide device comprises a base (28) anchored in ~~the~~ said seabed (12), and said rails (30) ~~being solidly~~ rail is fixed to said base (28).

10. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein claim 8 or 9, ~~characterized in that~~ said unidirectional arresting device comprises means (39) comprise means forming a rack (40), mounted in the direction of said rail means forming rails (30), and means forming a ratchet (42) mounted on said trolley (32), ~~said means forming a ratchet (42) being~~ suitable for engagement and engageable in said means forming a rack for allowing displacement of said trolley as said flowline is stretched and for prohibiting return displacement of said trolley (40).

11. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in ~~any one of claims 8 to 10,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ claim 8, wherein said trolley (32) comprises ~~first a~~ reception device operable ~~means (35) suitable~~ for receiving said joint end of said flow line.

12. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in ~~claim 9, characterized in that~~ 11, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said trolley (32) comprises~~[[,]]~~ moreover, a second reception device operable ~~means suitable~~ for receiving a free end of said subsea riser for enabling interconnecting said joint end of said flow line and said free end of said subsea riser.

13. (New) The system as claimed in claim 8, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said trolley comprises a reception device operable for receiving said free end of said subsea riser for interconnecting said joint end of said flow line and said free end of said subsea riser.

14. (New) The system as claimed in claim 8, wherein said slide device comprises a rail extending in said direction of elongation along which said trolley is slidable.

15. (New) The system as claimed in claim 6, further comprising a subsea riser having a free end; said subsea riser is extended in a catenary.

16. (New) The method as claimed in claim 2, further comprising extending said riser in a catenary.